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LEGISLATIVE SUPPLEMENT

CONTENTS

PART-I	**ACTS**	PAGES
	THE HARYANA SHREE MATA BHIMESHWARI DEVI MANDIR (ASHRAM), BERI SHRINE ACT, 2022	191—199
	(HARYANA ACT NO.25 OF 2025)	
PART-II	**ORDINANCES**	
	NIL	
PART-III	**DELEGATED LEGISLATION**	
	NIL	
PART-IV	**CORRECTION SLIPS, REPUBLICATIONS AND REPLACEMENTS**	
	NIL	

PART - I

HARYANA GOVERNMENT

LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT

Notification

The 3rd December, 2025

No. Leg.31/2025.— The following Act of the Legislature of the State of Haryana received the assent of the President of India on the 3rd July, 2025 and is hereby published for general information:-

HARYANA ACT NO. 25 OF 2025

THE HARYANA SHREE MATA BHIMESHWARI DEVI MANDIR (ASHRAM), BERI SHRINE ACT, 2022

AN

ACT

to provide for the better management, administration and governance to Shree Mata Bhimeshwari Devi Mandir (Ashram), Beri and its endowments including the lands and buildings attached or appurtenant to the Shrine.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Haryana in the Seventy-third Year of the Republic of India as follows:-

Short title and commencement.

1. (1) This Act may be called the Haryana Shree Mata Bhimeshwari Devi Mandir (Ashram), Beri Shrine Act, 2022.

(2) It shall come into force on the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Definitions.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,-

(a) "Board" means Shree Mata Bhimeshwari Devi Mandir (Ashram), Beri Shrine Board constituted under section 4 of this Act;

(b) "endowment" means all property, movable or immovable, belonging to or given or endowed for the maintenance, improvement, additions to, or worship in the Shrine or for the performance of any service or charity, connected therewith and includes the idols installed therein, the premises of the Shrine and gifts of property made to anyone within the precincts of the Shrine and lands and buildings attached, or appurtenant thereto;

(c) "Government" means the Government of the State of Haryana;

(d) "math" means a math as understood under Hindu law;

(e) "member" means member of the Board constituted under section 4 and includes a member-secretary, Vice-Chairman and Chairman professing Hindu religion, in case Chairman, Vice-Chairman and member-secretary happens to be non-Hindu, the Government may appoint another member in his place professing Hindu religion;

(f) "prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Act;

(g) "Pujari" means pujari and includes pandits and purohits or such other person who perform or conducts puja or other rituals;

(h) "Shrine" means the Shrine of Shree Mata Bhimeshwari Devi Mandir (Ashram), Beri and all temples, math and idols within the premises of Shree Mata Bhimeshwari Devi Mandir (Ashram), Beri Shrine and endowments attached thereto, established with a religious object for a public purpose and includes,-

(i) all properties movable or immovable belonging to or given or endowed for worship in, maintenance or improvement of addition to, temple, for the performance of any service or charity connected therewith; and

(ii) the idols installed in the temple, clothes, ornaments and things for decoration etc.

(i) "Shrine fund" means and includes all sums received by or on behalf of, or for the time being held for the benefit of the Shrine, and also includes all the endowments which have been or may hereafter be made for the benefit of the Shrine or any other deity thereof in the name of any person, or for the convenience, comfort or benefit of the pilgrims thereto, as well as all offerings made to any of the deities comprised in the Shrine;

(j) "temple" means a place, by whatever designation known used as a place of public religious worship, and dedicated to, or for the benefit of, or used as of right by, the Hindu community or any section thereof as a place of public religious worship.

Vesting of Shrine fund.

3. The ownership of the Shrine and Shrine fund, from the commencement of this Act, shall vest in the Board and the Board shall be entitled to its possession, administration and use for the purposes of this Act.

Constitution of Board.

4. (1) The administration, management and governance of the Shrine shall vest in a Board consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and not more than eleven members. The composition of the Board shall be as follows:-

(a) Chief Minister, Haryana, shall be the Chairman;

(b) Minister-in-Charge, Urban Local Bodies Department, Haryana, shall be Vice-Chairman;

(c) Secretary to Government, Haryana, Urban Local Bodies Department, whether designated as Additional Chief Secretary or Principal Secretary to Government, Haryana, Urban Local Bodies Department, as the case may be, shall be the ex-officio member;

(d) Deputy Commissioner, Jhajjar, shall be the ex-officio member-secretary;

(e) Seven persons to be nominated by the Government, as members, in the following manner:-

(i) two persons, who in the opinion of the Government, have distinguished themselves in the service of Hindu religion or culture;

(ii) two women, who in the opinion of the Government, have distinguished themselves in the service of Hindu religion, culture or social work, especially in regard to advancement of women;

(iii) two persons, who in the opinion of the Government, have distinguished themselves in administration, legal affairs or financial matters;

(iv) one eminent Hindu of the State of Haryana.

(2) A person shall not be eligible for being nominated as a member, or for being a member of the Board, if he suffers or incurs any of the disqualification as specified in section 8 of this Act.

Defraying of Shrine fund.

5. The Shrine fund shall be applied for –

(a) defraying expenses for the proper maintenance of the temple, performance of puja and other rituals;

(b) providing amenities, facilities to the visiting devotees;

(c) establishment and maintenance of the educational institutions;

(d) training of vidyarthies;

(e) securing the health, safety and convenience of disciples, pilgrims and worshippers visiting the Shrine; and

(f) in case of any national calamity.

Incorporation of Board.

6. The Board shall be a body corporate and shall have perpetual succession and a common seal and may by the said name sue and be sued.

Terms of office of nominated member.

7. A nominated member of the Board shall hold office during the pleasure of the Government:

Provided that his term of office shall not exceed three years from the date of his nomination under section 4.

Disqualifications for membership of Board.

8. A person shall be disqualified for being nominated as a member of the Board, if he,-

(a) is not a Hindu;

(b) is of unsound mind and stand so declared by a competent court or if he is a deaf, dumb or is suffering from contagious leprosy or any virulent contagious disease;

(c) is an undischarged insolvent;

(d) is appearing as a legal practitioner against the Board;

(e) is sentenced by criminal court for an offence involving moral turpitude, such sentence not having been reversed;

(f) is an office holder or servant attached to the Board;

(g) has been guilty of corruption or misconduct in the administration of the Shrine;

(h) is addicted to intoxicating liquors or drugs; and

(i) in the opinion of the Government has acted against the interest of the Shrine.

Dissolution and supersession of Board.

9. (1) If in the opinion of the Government, the Board is not competent to perform, or persistently makes default in performing the duties imposed on it under this Act or exceeds or abuses its powers, the Government may, after due enquiry and after giving the Board a reasonable opportunity of being heard, by order, dissolve or supersede the Board and reconstitute another Board in accordance with the Act.

(2) Where a Board is dissolved or superseded under this section, the Government shall assume all the powers and perform all the functions and exercise all the powers of the Board for a period not exceeding three months or until the constitution of another Board, whichever is earlier.

Filling up of vacancies.

10. (1) Casual vacancy of a member shall be filled in the same manner as provided in section 4.

(2) The term of a member nominated to fill a casual vacancy shall expire on the day on which the term of the member in whose vacancy the nomination has been made would have expired.

(3) Nothing done by the Board shall be invalid only by the reason of there being a casual vacancy.

Resignation.

11. Any nominated member may resign from his office as member by giving notice in writing to the Chairman and his office shall become vacant from the date of acceptance of his resignation by the Government.

Office and meetings of Board.

12. (1) The Board shall maintain its office at such place, as it may decide.

(2) In every meeting of the Board, the Chairman or in his absence, Vice Chairman shall preside.

(3) No business shall be transacted at any meeting unless at least five members are present.

(4) Every decision of the Board shall, except as expressly provided by this Act, be by a majority of votes, and in case of equality of votes, the person presiding shall have a second or casting vote.

Appointment of officers and officials of Board.

13. (1) For the efficient discharge of the duties assigned to it under this Act, the Board may appoint such other officers and officials as it considers necessary with such designations, pay, allowances and other remunerations and perquisites as the Board, may determine, from time to time:

Provided that Sub Divisional Officer (Civil), Beri and Secretary, Municipal Committee, Beri shall be the Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Officer respectively of the Board.

(2) The Chairman of the Board, subject to any rules made under this Act, shall have the power to transfer, suspend, remove or dismiss any officer or official of the Board for the breach of discipline, carelessness, unfitness, neglect of duty or misconduct or for any other sufficient cause:

Provided that where the officer or the official is a Government officer or official, he may be reverted to his parent cadre or department in the Government.

(3) The terms and conditions of service of officers or officials of the Board shall be such, as may be prescribed.

Public servant.

14. The members, officers and officials of the Board shall, while acting or purporting to act in pursuance of the provisions of this Act or any rules made there under be deemed to be public servants within the meaning of section 21 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (Central Act 45 of 1860).

Liability of member.

15. Every member of the Board shall be liable for the loss, waste or misapplication of the Shrine fund if such loss, waste or misapplication is a direct consequence of his willful act or omission while acting as member and a suit for compensation may be instituted against him by the Board.

Alienation of movable and immovable property.

16. Both moveable and immovable properties including jewellery, ornaments which have once been adorned on the idols or other valuable property of non-perishable nature forming part of the Shrine fund shall be transferred, exchanged, sold or disposed of with the previous sanction of the Government on the recommendations of the Board.

Power to borrow or lend.

17. No money shall be borrowed or lent except by a resolution of the Board and the approval of the Government.

Duties of Board.

18. Subject to the provisions of this Act and the rules made thereunder, it shall be the duty of the Board,-

(i) to arrange for the proper performance of worship at the Shrine;

(ii) to provide facilities for the proper performance of worship by the pilgrims;

(iii) to make arrangements for the safe custody and preservation of the Shrine fund, valuable security and jewellery;

(iv) to undertake for the benefit of worshippers and pilgrims-

(a) the construction of buildings for their accommodation;

(b) the construction of sanitary work; and

(c) the improvement of means of communication;

(v) to undertake the developmental activities concerning the area of the Shrine and its surroundings;

(vi) to make suitable arrangements for the imparting of religious instructions and general education;

(vii) to make provision of medical relief for worshippers and pilgrims;

(viii) to make provision for the payment of suitable emoluments to the salaried staff;

(ix) to do all such things as may be incidental and conducive to the efficient management, maintenance and administration of the Shrine and the Shrine fund and the convenience of the pilgrims.

Rights of Pujari and terms and conditions of existing employees and other persons.

19. (1) All the rights of Pujari shall stand extinguished from the date of commencement of this Act:

Provided that the Government may appoint a Tribunal consisting of one or more persons in such manner, as may be prescribed, which, after giving personal hearing to the Pujari and the representatives of the Board, shall recommend compensation to be paid by the Board, in lieu of extinction of his rights. While making its recommendations to the Board, the Tribunal shall have due regard to the income which the Pujari had been deriving:

Provided further that where a Pujari surrenders his right to compensation and offers himself for employment to the Board, the Board shall cause his suitability for such employment to be adjudged and may offer him employment in case he is found suitable by the selection committee to be appointed for the purpose subject to the Pujari giving an undertaking to abide by the administrative and disciplinary control of the Board in accordance with the rules made under this Act.

(2) All such employees of the Shrine as are engaged on any function connected with the Shrine shall, unless they exercise an option to the contrary be deemed to have become the employees of the Board on the commencement of this Act and shall be subject to the administrative and disciplinary control of the Board. Their terms and conditions of service shall be regulated by the rules made under this Act and shall receive such remuneration, which shall, as far as practicable not be inferior than the present level of remuneration and other terms and conditions of their service.

(3) The shopkeepers and other lease holders, who are the tenants of the Shrine in the area referred to in this Act shall become the tenants of the Board.

Appointment, tenure and others terms and conditions of Pujari.

20. (1) The Board or the officer authorised by it, shall appoint Pujaris of the Shrine and while making such appointment, shall have due regard to the claims of persons belonging to the religious denomination for whose benefit the Shrine is mainly maintained.

(2) A Pujari shall hold office for a term of five years, unless in the meanwhile he is removed or dismissed or his resignation is accepted by the Board or the officer authorised by it or he otherwise ceases to be a Pujari.

(3) A Pujari shall be eligible for re-appointment.

(4) When a permanent vacancy occurs in the office of the Pujari of the Shrine, the Pujari shall be appointed by the Board or by an officer authorised by it.

(5) When temporary vacancy occurs in such an office by reason of the suspension of a Pujari, a Pujari in his place shall be appointed by the Board or the officer authorised by it to discharge the functions of the Pujari until his disability ceases.

Power to suspend, remove or dismiss.

21. (1) The Board or the officer authorised by it may suspend, remove or dismiss the Pujari for,-

(a) willful disobedience of any order issued under the provisions of this Act;

(b) any malfeasance, misfeasance, breach of trust or neglect of duty in respect of the Shrine or alienation of any property in contravention of this Act;

(c) any misappropriation of, or improper dealing with, the properties of the Shrine;

(d) having been found under the influence of intoxication liquor or drugs in the Shrine; and

(e) unsoundness of mind or other mental or physical defect or infirmity which renders him unfit for discharging the functions of a Pujari:

Provided that no Pujari shall be removed or dismissed by the Board or the officer authorised by it under this section unless he has been given a reasonable opportunity of being heard.

(2) A Pujari who is suspended, removed or dismissed by the Board or the officer authorised by it under sub-section (1), may within one month from the date of receipt of the order of suspension, removal or dismissal, prefer an appeal to such authority and in such manner, as may be prescribed.

(3) A Pujari so suspended, removed or dismissed may be allowed such maintenance, as may be fixed by the Board or the officer authorised by it, considering the financial condition of the Shrine.

Disqualifications of Pujari.

22. A person shall be disqualified for being appointed as, and for continuing to be, a Pujari, if he,-

(a) is an un-discharged insolvent;

(b) is of unsound mind and stands so declared by a competent court;

(c) is interested either directly or indirectly in a subsisting lease or any property of or contract made with, or any work being done for, the Shrine or is in arrears of any dues payable to the Shrine;

(d) is appearing as a legal practitioner on behalf of or against the Shrine;

(e) has been sentenced by a criminal court for an offence involving moral turpitude, and such sentence has not been reversed;

(f) has acted adversely to the interest of the Shrine;

(g) is an addict to intoxicating liquors or drugs;

(h) has not completed twenty-one years of age; and

(i) ceases to profess Hindu religion or persuasion or to belong to the religious denominations to which the Shrine pertains.

Preparation and maintenance of register.

23. (1) A register shall be prepared and maintained, in such form and manner, as may be prescribed to show,-

(a) the origin and history of the Shrine and particulars as to the custom or usage of the Shrine;

(b) particulars of the scheme of administration and of the scale of expenditure;

(c) the name of all officers and officials to which any salary, emolument of perquisite is attached and the nature, time and conditions of service in each case;

(d) the money, jewelleries, jewels, gold, silver, precious stones, vessels and utensils and other movable belongings to the Shrine, with their weights, details of the constituent elements and estimated value thereof;

(e) particulars of immovable properties and all other endowments of the Shrine and all title deeds and other documents;

(f) particulars of details of constituent elements and colored photographs of the idols and other images in or connected with the Shrine, whether intended for worship or for being carried in processions;

(g) particulars of ancient or historical records with their contents in brief; and

(h) such other particulars, as may be required by the Board.

(2) The register shall be prepared, signed and verified by the Chief Executive Officer or an officer authorised by the Board within three months from the date of the notice served upon him by the member-secretary in this behalf or within such further period as may be allowed by the member-secretary.

(3) The Board may, after such enquiry, as it may consider necessary, recommend and direct the Chief Executive Officer or officer authorised by the Board to carry out such alternations, omissions or additions in the register, as the Board may think fit.

(4) The Chief Executive Officer or officer authorised by the Board shall carry out the directions of the Board and submit the register to the Board for approval within a period of three months from the date of the order.

Annual verification of register.

24. (1) The Chief Executive Officer or any officer authorised by the Board shall scrutinize the entries in the register every year or at such interval of times, as may be prescribed, and submit the same to the Board through the member-secretary for its approval.

(2) The Board may, thereupon, after such inquiry, as it may consider necessary, direct the alternations, omissions or additions, if any, to be made in the register.

(3) The Chief Executive Officer or any officer authorised by the Board shall carry out the alterations, omissions or additions ordered by the Board in the copy of the register kept by him, within three months from the date of the order.

Inspection of property and documents.

25. (1) The member-secretary of the Board or any officer authorised in that behalf by the Board or the Government, may inspect all movable or immovable properties belonging to, and all records, correspondence, plans, accounts and other documents relating to the Shrine and it shall be the duty of all officers and officials working under him and any person having concern in the administration thereof to afford all such assistance and facilities, as may be necessary or reasonably required in regard to such inspection and also to produce any such movable property or document for inspection, if so required.

(2) For the purposes of inspection as aforesaid, the inspecting authority shall, subject to the local practice, custom or usage, have power to enter at any reasonable hour the premises of the Shrine.

(3) Nothing in this section shall be deemed to authorize any person to enter the premises or place referred to in sub-section (2) or any part thereof unless such person professes the religion to which the premises or place belongs.

Restriction on registration of documents.

26. Notwithstanding anything contained in the Registration Act, 1908 (Central Act 16 of 1908), the registering authority shall not accept for registration any deed or alienation of immovable property belonging to the Shrine unless a certified copy of the order made under section 16 sanctioning such alienation is filed along with the deed.

Recovery of immovable property unlawfully alienated.

27. (1) Whenever it comes to the notice of the Board that any immovable property belonging to the Shrine has been alienated in contravention of the Act, it shall refer the matter to the Government.

(2) Upon receipt of a reference made under sub-section (1), the Government shall hold a summary enquiry in such manner, as may be prescribed and on being satisfied that any such property has been so alienated, shall proceed in accordance with law.

Removal of encroachment of land and premises belonging to Shrine.

28. (1) The provisions contained in the Haryana Public Premises and Land (Eviction and Rent Recovery) Act, 1972 (24 of 1972), shall be applicable as far as may be, in respect of unauthorised occupation of any land or premises belonging to the Shrine, as if it were the property of Government, within the meaning of that Act.

(2) The member-secretary of the Board may make an application for taking up appropriate proceedings under the Act referred to in sub-section (1) to the authority competent thereunder and thereupon it shall be lawful for such authority to take action in accordance with the provisions of that Act.

Power to act for protection of Shrine.

29. (1) Where the Board has the reason to believe that –

(a) any property belonging to the Shrine is in danger of being wasted, damaged or improperly alienated by any person; or

(b) such person threatens, or intends to remove or dispose of that property,

the member-secretary of that Board may, for the purpose of staying and preventing the wastage, damage, alienation, sale, removal, or disposition of such property, proceed in accordance with law.

Budget of Shrine.

30. (1) The member-secretary of the Board shall, before the end of December each year, submit to such authority, in such form and manner, as may be prescribed, a budget showing the probable receipts and disbursement of the Shrine during the following financial year.

(2) Every such budget shall make adequate provision for-

(a) the scale of expenditure for the time being in force and customary expenditure;

(b) the due discharged of all liabilities binding on the Shrine;

(c) the expenditure on religious, educational and charitable purposes not inconsistent with the objects of the Shrine;

(d) the encouragement and the spread of religious instructions according to the tenets of the Shrine;

(e) the expenditure on the repairs and renovation of the buildings and preservation and protection of the properties and assets of the Shrine.

(3) The Board may, on receipt of the budget make such alterations, omissions or additions therein, as it may deem proper.

(4) Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law for the time being in force or in any custom, usage or practice to the contrary, the provisions made for remuneration of any office holder or for any other item of expenditure in respect of the Shrine may be increased, decreased, or modified by the Board if such increase, decrease of modification is considered necessary in view of the financial condition and the interest of the Shrine.

Accounts.

31. (1) The officer authorised by the Board shall maintain regular accounts of all receipts and disbursements. Such accounts shall be kept for each calendar year separately in such form and shall contain such particulars, as may be prescribed.

(2) The account of the Shrine shall be audited annually by a person who is a Chartered Accountant within the meaning of the Chartered Accountants Act, 1949 (Central Act 38 of 1949) or by such other person, as may be authorised by the Government in this behalf.

(3) Every auditor conducting the audit under sub-section(2) shall have access to the accounts and to all books, vouchers, other documents and records in possession of or under the control of the officer authorised by the Board.

Penalty.

32. If any Pujari, officer, official or any other person concerned with the administration of the Shrine-

(a) refuses or willfully fails to comply with the provisions of this Act or the rules framed thereunder or the orders and directions issued thereunder or obstructs any proceeding taken under this Act or the rules framed thereunder; or

(b) refuses or willfully fails to furnish any reports, statements, accounts or other information called for under this Act,

the Board or any officer authorised by the Board may file a complaint against the Pujari, officer, official or any other person and he shall be punishable with imprisonment which may extend to six months and with fine which may extend to one thousand rupees.

Penalty for wrongful with-holding of property belonging to Shrine.

33. Any person who-

(a) having in possession, custody or control of any property, document or books of accounts belonging to the Shrine, the management and control of which has been regulated under the provisions of this Act or the rules framed thereunder, wrongfully withholds such property or documents or books of accounts from the Board or any other person duly authorised by the Government or the Board to inspect or call for the same;

(b) wrongfully obtains possession of, or retains any property, document or books of accounts of the Boards or willfully withholds or fails to furnish or deliver to the Board or any other person authorised by it in this behalf; or

(c) wrongfully removes, destroys or mutilates property, documents or books of accounts of the Shrine,

shall be punishable with imprisonment for a term which may extend to one year or with fine or with both.

Protection of action taken in good faith.

34. (1) No officer or official of the Government shall be liable in any civil or criminal proceeding in respect of any act done or purporting to have been done under this Act or the rule made thereunder, if the act has been done in good faith and in the course of execution of the duties imposed or in discharge of the functions assigned by or under this Act or the rules framed thereunder.

(2) No suit or other legal proceedings shall lie against the Government for any damage caused or likely to be caused or any injury suffered or likely to be suffered by virtue of any provisions of this Act or by anything done in good faith or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or the rules made thereunder.

Power to give directions.

35. The Government may, from time to time, give such general or specific directions, in writing, to the Board for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Act and while so doing may rescind, alter or modify any order made by the Board and the Board shall follow them in the discharge of its duties.

Power of Government to review.

36. The Government may, either suo motu or on an application moved by any person considering himself aggrieved from any order or decision of the Board made under this Act, review such order or decision and make such order thereon, as it thinks fit:

Provided that before any order is made under this section, the Government shall afford any person likely to be affected adversely by such order, an opportunity of being heard.

Powers to remove difficulties.

37. (1) If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the Government may, by an order published in the Official Gazette, make such provisions not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, as appears to it necessary or expedient for removing the difficulty:

Provided that no such order shall be made after the expiry of three years from the commencement of this Act.

(2) Every order made under this section shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is issued, before the State Legislature.

Bar of jurisdiction.

38. Save as expressly provided in this Act, no civil court shall have jurisdiction to entertain or adjudicate upon any dispute or matter which is to be decided by any officer or authority under this Act and in respect of which the decision or order of such officer or authority has been made final and conclusive.

Power to make rules.

39. (1) The Government may, subject to the condition of previous publication, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing powers, such rules may provide for-

(a) terms and conditions of service of the employees of the Shrine under sections 13 and 19;

(b) constitution of Tribunal under section 19;

(c) the authority to which and the manner in which appeal is to be preferred under section 21;

(d) the form and manner in which the registers are to be maintained under section 23;

(e) the scrutiny of the entries in the register under section 24;

(f) the manner in which enquiry is to be conducted under section 27;

(g) the authority to which, the form and manner in which the budget is to be prepared and submitted under section 30;

(h) the form of statements, returns and other forms required to be maintained by or under this Act and the manner in which these are to be maintained;

(i) the returns, accounts or other information to submitted by the officer authorised by the Board;

(j) the preservation, maintenance, management and improvements of the properties and buildings of the Shrine;

(k) the preservation of idol and images in Shrine; and

(l) any other matter which is to be or may be prescribed under this Act.

(3) Every rule made under this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be, after it is made, before the House of the State Legislature, while it is in session.

Certain enactments to cease to apply to Shrine.

40. From the date of commencement of this Act, the provisions of any other law which might be applicable to the Shrine, shall cease to apply thereto:

Provided that such cessation shall not in any way affect-

(a) any right, title, interest, obligation or liability already acquired, accrued or incurred;

(b) any legal proceedings for any remedy in respect of such right, title, interest, obligation or liability, instituted; or

(c) anything duly done or suffered.

RITU GARG,
ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT, HARYANA,
LAW AND LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT.

12254—L.R.—H.G.P., Pkl.